4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

197 slaves, the Holeyas, have a language of their own, which is intelligible to themselves only. Upon closer examination, however, it is apparent, that the Kodagu tongue is but a dialect more or less related to the 5 principal Dravidian languages—the Telugu, Tamil, Malayálam, Tulu and Canarese—but eminently so to the older forms of these languages. [212] The old Coorg chants (Palamé) have been written for ages past with Canarese letters, and the first attempt in printing a [214] Coorg Grammar has likewise been carried out in Canarese type, also the Canarese numerical figures are used by the Coorgs. The Kodagu language is shorter, more simple, but less refined than the Canarese and a convenient medium for conversation; by its contracted, rounded forms with abrupt terminations in half vowels, it does not require a great exertion of the organs of speech and admits of chewing betel and retaining the precious juice, whilst the flow of conversation is uninterruptedly carried on. Indeed a beginner should practise the pronunciation with his mouth half full of water, till he can speak without spilling any. The Kodagu language has not the force and expressiveness of the Canarese, but it glides more readily over the lips. It is rich in words and forms and, as the Coorg chants attest, admirably suited for expressing easy flowing poetry of a humorous or solemn strain.

194 Of the 51 letters that constitute the new Canarese alphabet - old Canarese has only 47—the Kodagu language appropriates [212] but 33, viz. 12 vowels, 1 half consonant, 16 classified and 4 unclassified consonants, for it rejects all aspirated consonants.

The vowels are: the short and long a ಅ, ಆ, e ಎ, ಏ, i ಇ, ಈ, o ಒ, ಓ, u ಉ, ಊ, and the diphthongs ei ಐ and ou ಔ.

The half consonant or medium between vowel and consonant is ಂ which sounds like m, n, or ng, according to position.